

*MASTER  
NEGATIVE  
NO. 92-80627-8*

MICROFILMED 1992

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES/NEW YORK

as part of the  
"Foundations of Western Civilization Preservation Project"

Funded by the  
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Reproductions may not be made without permission from  
Columbia University Library

## COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

The copyright law of the United States -- Title 17, United States Code -- concerns the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material...

Columbia University Library reserves the right to refuse to accept a copy order if, in its judgement, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of the copyright law.

*AUTHOR:*

*TITLE:* HAVE YOU HEARD  
THE NEWS ?....

*PLACE:* LONDON

*DATE:* 1835

Master Negative #

92-80627-8

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES  
PRESERVATION DEPARTMENT

BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

Original Material as Filmed - Existing Bibliographic Record

942  
21

Have you heard the news? an address to the  
freemen of...Great Britain upon the proposed destruction  
of their rights by the whig ministry, by a freeman.  
London 1835. D. 12p.

No. 6 of a vol. ☐ of pamphlets.

Restrictions on Use:

-----  
TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

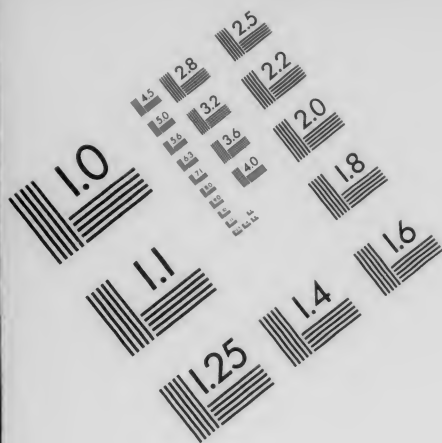
FILM SIZE: 35 mm

REDUCTION RATIO: 11x

IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA ☒ IIA IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 8-3-92 INITIALS HT

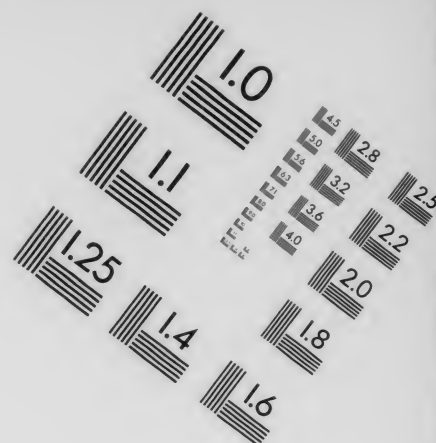
FILMED BY: RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS, INC WOODBRIDGE, CT



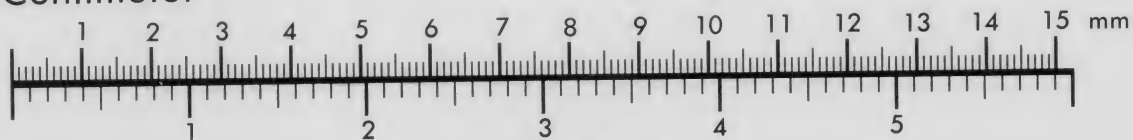
**AIM**

**Association for Information and Image Management**

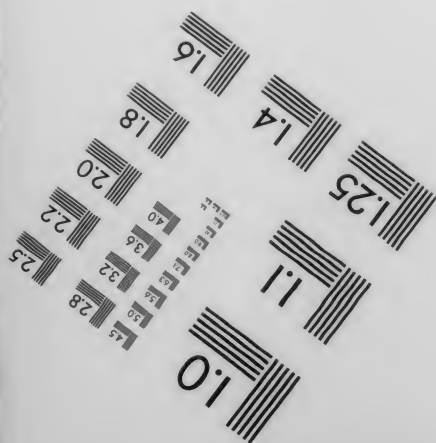
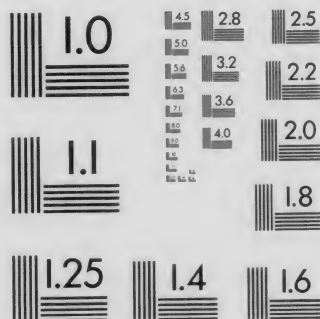
1100 Wayne Avenue, Suite 1100  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910  
301/587-8202



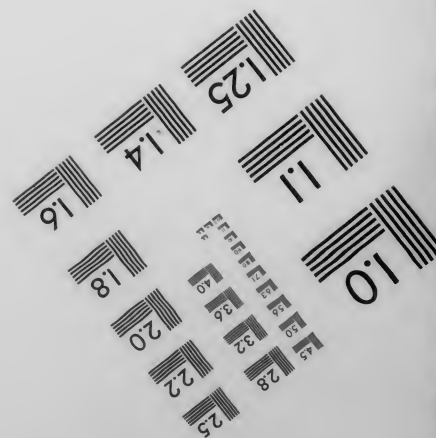
Centimeter



Inches



MANUFACTURED TO AIM STANDARDS  
BY APPLIED IMAGE, INC.



No. 6  
x  
R  
HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS?

---

AN ADDRESS  
TO  
**THE FREEMEN**  
OF  
ALL THE CORPORATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN,  
UPON THE PROPOSED  
DESTRUCTION OF THEIR RIGHTS  
BY THE  
**WHIG MINISTRY.**

BY A FREEMAN.

LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY C. F. COCK, 21, FLEET-STREET.

1835.

Price 1d. each; 9d. per dozen; 5s. per 100; or 2l. per 1000.

AN ADDRESS,  
&c.

BROTHER FREEMEN!!!

Have you heard the news? Or, are you in a place where you have the blessing of a Whig Corporation, and therefore are all in the dark and don't know what is going on against you in the House of Commons? what this precious set of *deceivers*, the Whig Ministry, are up to? Perhaps you don't, and therefore, in my plain way, I will endeavour to tell you, not only what they are about, but also what we must do to protect our rights from their destroying hands. You must, however, excuse my plain way of expressing myself. If I had an education like Lord John Russell, I could dip my pen in *flummery*, and write you *such* a smooth varnished tale; but as I cannot do this, I will do it in a *plain straightforward way*; and perhaps that is what would puzzle his Lordship, for "use," they say, "is second nature." You must know, then, brother freemen, that when the Reform Bill was passed, all our rights and privileges of voting, which we might acquire from our fathers, or which were earned by our own *servitude and hard work*, were preserved to us and our children, which was just and proper. No one *then spoke fairer* than Lord John Russell and his party who brought in the Reform Bill; no one talked more about protecting our rights; and it was *then* thought that they were our best friends and protectors: and that when that Bill was passed our rights were preserved for ever; at any rate, I never thought (or I never would have voted for a Whig as I did) that only *three years* afterwards I should have *that* vote, which I obtained by my own *servitude and hard work, taken away from me by this very Lord John Russell*; by those very Whigs

for whom I voted, and who talked so much about our rights, and made some almost believe that after the Reform Bill they would never be able to stuff themselves out enough with the roast beef and plum pudding which they would then get for nothing. The Reform Bill, however, has been three years *the law of the land*; they have got no roast beef and plum pudding, but a Poor-law Bill, which certainly is enough to give a poor man his supper. *And now so it is*, brother freemen; that this Lord John Russell has brought in a Bill, which he *pretended* was to reform Corporations; and which, if it had been for *that alone*, would be all very well, for we know some of them want a little *Reform sauce*, especially some of the Whig ones; for, do you know, I recollect reading, some little time since, a speech of Sir Robert Peel's, where he told Lord John Russell, flat to his face, that Whig Corporations were as bad as the others; and he mentioned either Portsmouth or Plymouth, where they spent 400*l.* out of 500*l.* — what do you suppose for? For the good of the town? Oh no! For the poor freemen? Oh no!! For widows and orphans? Oh no!!! *but for stuffing the precious carcasses of the worthy Whig members, the Whig mayor, and the Whig aldermen, with all the good things they could get!!!!* Now, brother freemen, this Corporation Bill, so far as it would stop all this unmerciful stuffing and cramming, and would really reform abuses, is all very well, and every one supposed that such *alone* was its object. But I come now to the *discovery* of one of the most *trumpery, underhand, dirty, paltry, base, and disgraceful tricks*, that a *trumpery, underhand, dirty, paltry, mean, and disgraceful set* could be guilty of. *A clause, brother freemen, was smuggled into this*



*Bill, to deprive us and our children of our right of voting, acquired by the sweat of our own brow, or that of our ancestors!!!! Yes! these Whigs, these liberal Whigs, attacked us like snakes in the grass, when we were little aware of it; and they seek to take away our rights without giving us a fair opportunity of defending ourselves. This shameful robbery clause was discovered and exposed by some of the Conservative party, who, with that gallant man Sir Robert Peel, defended our cause, and tried to preserve to us those rights which nothing but rascality would take from us. And what did the Whigs do?—these friends of the poor—these protectors of their rights? Why, they voted against us!! they voted to deprive us and our children of their freedom!! Yes! and they actually carried their plan of robbery and injustice by a majority of 28!! Through the help of Daniel O'Connell and the Irish Papist members, who were all against us to a man, they succeeded in their base attempts to deprive us of our rights!! And what reason do you suppose they gave for their atrocious conduct? "Oh!" said they, "freemen are very poor, and therefore very corrupt, a bad set, not fit to have a vote!" Good God! is it come to this? Is a man to be condemned without trial as corrupt, merely because he happens to be poor? How has John Russell's father just muddled up forty votes out of a forty-acre field? Is not a freeman as independent as any one of these faggot voters, who dare not say their soul is their own if John Duke of Bedford tells them it is not? Is not a freeman as good as a ten-pound householder, and quite as likely to refuse a bribe? I say he is, and I challenge Lord John Russell and all his tribe, and all his father's "faggots," to prove that he is not. Shall we then, brother freemen, be dragged (like captives of old) chained to the tail of O'Connell?*

Shall we allow Papists to trample on our rights and cast us to dogs? Shall we do this? No!!! Freemen we are!!! and freemen we will remain!!! And as we can no longer trust these deceiving Whigs, let us go in a body to some stanch conservatives in our city or borough, and beg of them to prepare a petition *without delay to the House of Lords*, to throw out this pestilent Bill, *this destroyer of our rights*; and then perhaps we shall get rid not only of this Bill, but of the authors and contrivers of the mischief, these cowardly deceitful Whigs. Another election will perhaps follow: *do not vote for one of them, tell them to go home and read the Corporation Bill, and see whether they can find any thing in it to deprive freemen of their rights!!!! Tell them, although poor, you are as honest as they are!*

That you do not like men who talk about preserving the rights of the poor one year and destroy them the next!!!

Send them to their own meditations over their broken promises and pledges, as a *lying, unworthy set*, who spoke but to deceive, who made a convenience of you, and now endeavour to crush you to atoms. Tell them you will vote for a good conservative who will promise to preserve your rights from destruction by Lord John Russell or any other Lord, Daniel O'Connell or any other Papist. Do this and you may remain FREEMEN!! Do it not and you ARE LOST!!!!!! And now, brother freemen, you shall read the substance of the speeches (for they are too long to put in a whole) of Mr. Praed, Sir Robert Peel, and some other conservatives; and of that sneak Lord John Russell, against your rights, and then judge who are your friends and who your enemies.

am, Brother Freemen,  
ONE OF YOU!!!!!!!!!!

## SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEECHES.

On the Tenth Clause being proposed,

Mr. PRAED rose to move, in the shape of an amendment to this clause, the proposition which he had originally intended to move as an instruction to the committee, before the bill was committed. The object of moving his present amendment was to bring under their consideration the operations of this bill, as they affected the constituency provided for the country by the Reform Act. The question involved in it was, whether it was material to diminish the constituency of the country, and to deprive them of the rights which had been guaranteed to them by the Reform Act. He claimed for the freemen of corporate towns, and for their successors, the right of voting secured to them by the Reform Act, on the ground that rights of that nature ought to be secured to their possessors in perpetuity. The hon. Member then proceeded to contend that there was no reason for this *wholesale disfranchisement of the freemen*, and in proof of his argument, quoted several extracts from the report of the committee on the Stafford election, to show that the 10*l*. householders of Stafford were as open to bribery as the burgesses. He also read the evidence of an inhabitant of Stafford, relative to the transactions at Sir John Campbell's election for that place. "Out of 536 voters," said that gentleman, "who voted for Sir John Campbell, I myself paid 53*l*." After such a statement it was a mockery to say that those who were electors on the 10*l*. franchise were in *any respect superior to the poor freemen*. When he had these great constitutional points to go upon, he was unwilling to put the question on the ground of hardship which this bill inflicted upon individuals, and yet the hardship was not an inconsiderable one on those whom it disfranchised. Individuals had paid large sums of money for their freedom, and downright robbery was committed upon them when they were deprived of their usual privileges.

There were also some persons whose rights were not inchoate but perfect, yet incomplete from their being absent as mariners from the town from which they sailed after their apprenticeship was completed. They would have been entitled to be placed on the roll had they been in the country, but by this Bill the right of enrolment on their return was taken from them. There was great dissatisfaction among the poorer classes, arising from the notion that the House was accustomed to neglect their rights in its legislation. He did not think that notion correct, but certainly many things had been done of late years which appeared *hard and harsh towards the lower orders*. He contended that if it was not desirable to bring more of the poorer classes into the constituency, *it certainly was not desirable to put more of them out*. He concluded by moving the following amendment:—"Provided always and be it enacted that in every borough, whether the same be a county of itself or not, where the right to vote in the election of members or a member to serve in Parliament for such borough is, according to the laws now in force, enjoyed by persons entitled to vote in virtue of some corporate right, nothing whatsoever in this act contained shall in anywise hinder or prevent any person or persons who now enjoy, or who hereafter according to the laws now in force might have acquired such corporate right, from enjoying or acquiring such corporate right for the purpose of voting in such elections."

Colonel SIBTHORP objected in the strongest terms to the *poor man being robbed of his little remaining right* by the present Bill, which involved a gross violation of the compact contained in the Reform Act, and such being the case, he thought no man who had a regard for faith or honesty could support the measure.

Lord J. RUSSELL would not enter at length into the subject of the amendment, having on a former occasion stated his reasons for refusing his assent to the proposition. He would state dryly and simply what he took to be the natural consequences of the plan, without any attempt at that kind of beautiful declamation and pretended sympathy for the rights of the poor which had been to-night poured forth

with a degree of gratuitous kindness as singular as it was unnecessary. *Was there anything so peculiar in the nature of those bodies of freemen, or in the rights which they possessed, as to induce us to retain and perpetuate them? He knew of nothing of the kind.* If this had been simply a question of altering the constituency fixed by the Reform Bill, *though he thought the freemen as a body more liable to corruption than other classes of voters*, he would have been for retaining them; but now that they were constructing a new corporate right, with a view to the better government of towns, it was necessary *to remodel the body*. He supported the clause as it stood, which enacted *nothing* as respected elections of members of Parliament, and he must vote against any special provision on that subject, as being exceedingly unadvisable in the present Bill, and wholly unjustified by the dictates of public policy and expediency.

Sir R. PEEL said, that the noble Lord having commenced his speech by promising to argue the question, not only briefly, but dryly, he thought the noble Lord meant not to draw upon his imagination, but to adhere to facts. However, when he found the noble Lord asserting that this measure *did not alter the Reform Act, and that it had nothing to do with the election of Members of Parliament*, he thought the noble Lord was not proceeding quite so dryly as he promised, but that he had drawn largely upon his fancy, and been guilty of as great a sophism as was ever committed. What he complained of was, that the noble Lord did not undertake to alter the Reform Act *explicitly and avowedly*, as, if he believed it to require alteration, he ought to have done, but that he proceeded *indirectly to effect his purpose*. *If the noble Lord believed that bribery existed generally among the lower classes of freemen, and could support his opinion by proof, let him come forward, and on that ground manfully and avowedly deprive the freemen of their right of voting for Members of Parliament.* But the noble Lord did not take that course, though in the course which he pursued he covertly interfered with the provisions of an act which we had been taught by the noble Lord himself to consider a final settlement. The noble Lord admitted that he did make use

of that expression when he consented to "*perpetuate*" the rights of the freemen, a phrase which dropped from the noble Lord in the unsuspecting candour of his nature. *A fine notion of perpetuity!* Since this final measure a period of three years had elapsed, and now the noble Lord came forward to *destroy the right* which he admitted he *intended to perpetuate*. Just see in what manner the right of freemen to vote for members of Parliament was finally confirmed by the Reform Bill. But, first, in reference to the statement that this was a compromise, a step of submission taken to induce the Lords to agree to the measure, and one which therefore ought not to be persisted in; he must say that this was a bad, not to say dishonest, argument. If you did procure the consent of the other House of Parliament to the Reform Bill, by preserving the rights of freemen, *to recede from that stipulation was not the way to procure the consent of the Lords a second time within three years*. He knew that there was nothing in the Reform Act to fetter the Legislature, but he contended that it was the duty of the Government, if they *ultimately intended to alter the right of voting possessed by freemen, to avow that they did not mean to "perpetuate" that privilege, but to propose an alteration in it on introducing a bill for the regulation of municipal corporations*. You did not take this course—you left the House of Lords, the country, and the entire body of freemen, under the impression that this was an acknowledgment and perpetuation of their right, which had received a new sanction and greater force from that *Reform Act of which you boasted as the second charter of our liberties*. What were the expressions pasted up in every village—"The Reform Bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill." How was this announcement adhered to? He had always prophesied at the moment when his friends professed their desire to accept the Reform Bill as our constitutional charter, and not only to accept, but abide by it, that any proposal for its modification was much more likely to come from the authors of the measure than from its opponents, and that the first provision to be modified would be one supposed peculiarly to affect the interests of the party in power. These rights being confirmed to the freeman by the Reform Bill, it did

tend to destroy our confidence in that "final settlement" when we found the noble Lord proceeding, not by a direct and open attack, but by sap and mine, to assail and take away privileges which had existed by long prescription, and which were confirmed by the recent enactment of 1831. It shook our confidence in the permanency of our second charter when, within three years, we saw so important a branch as this lopped off under the pretence of municipal reform. *If you proceeded against the freemen on the ground of bribery and corruption, in justice to those men you ought first to establish the existence of corruption before you attempted to punish them. It was not fair, on a general and vague presumption of bad repute, to destroy their rights.* He admitted cases had been proved of freemen abusing their franchise and taking bribes; but if the argument built on that ground were good for destroying the rights of freemen, *it was also good for destroying elective rights much more extensively.* The case of Stafford had been referred to; and if in that or any other instance it was proved that the practice of bribery was inveterate, and the voters irreclaimable, he would be willing to punish them. *But were no other parties liable to the charge of corruption except the freemen? Was it not notorious that the 10l. householders of the borough of Stafford were subject to the imputation of bribery?* He could add another case in which proof of bribery was clearly brought home to the electors. He referred to the election at Liverpool in 1830. You might say that in this case it was the freemen of Liverpool who were bribed. They were; but was the bribery confined to freemen who were not also 10l. householders? And who bribed them? Here was the evidence of Mr. W. Miers, a merchant of Liverpool, who acted as president on Mr. Ewart's side, assisted by Mr. Thorneley and Mr. Harvey. That gentlemen stated, that he paid away large sums in bank-notes to voters—of what class?—poor freemen? no; but persons in respectable situations in life. The witness gave the names and occupations of some of those parties. 50l. was the highest price paid for a vote—it was given to a retired brewer. A captain of militia received 30l. or 35l., witness was not sure which, but he

recollected giving this voter a certain sum, and that, discontented with the amount, the captain returned and obliged him to give 10l. more. Three brothers, named Howard, "very respectable men," got 10l. a piece. A ship-carpenter, with whom the witness frequently had dealings, and who was also "a respectable man," got 12l., but he came early in the day. He was worth 8,000l. or 10,000l.—"a very respectable gentleman." When asked whether the higher or lower class of voters received most in bribes, the witness replied that he thought the middling class got the most, because they kept off. Witness could not specify the total expense of the contest of 1830; he did not know what other individuals might have paid, he could only say what he had disbursed himself, and he thought that about 34,000l. had passed through his hands. Now he (Sir R. Peel) dared to say, that in the distribution of this 34,000l. the lower class of voters did participate, but it was equally clear that the higher class, 10l. householders, and persons occupying premises of considerably greater value, did also share in the bribery, and their crime was infinitely greater. Such cases as those of the man of substance who accepted 12l., and the captain who came back for an additional 10l., were of a much more aggravated nature than any corruption among the humbler voters. *He had a right to say, without any attempt at eloquent declamation, that poverty was not in itself a conclusive proof of a disposition to be bribed, and therefore that you ought not to act on a general assumption of the guilt of the humbler class of voters, but should have proofs of corruption before you inflicted upon them such a penalty as the present.*

Captain BERKELEY said he was aware it might be imputed to him, that in voting as he intended to do he was actuated by a desire to conciliate his constituents who were freemen; but that was not the case. He advocated the cause of the freemen because it had justice on its side, and because no valid ground had been alleged for depriving them of the privilege which had so lately been confirmed.

Mr. A. TREVOR next addressed the House, but in consequence of noises not so parliamentary, which were kept up almost without intermission during his speech, very little of

what he said was heard. He expressed his belief that the able and unanswerable speech of the right hon. Member for Tamworth, when it went forth to the country, would convince the people that the clause under consideration was one of the most flagrant pieces of injustice ever planned. He adverted to the fact of the Attorney General having said that freemen generally passed three-fourths of their lives in jail, and said that the hon. and learned Member would have hesitated long before he had made such an assertion on the hustings at Stafford. He designated the clause in question as an underhanded attempt, which it was disgraceful for a British Minister to make, to violate a solemn compact.

Mr. H. HUGHES defended the freemen from the attacks which had been made upon them. The noble Member for Stroud had behaved ungratefully to the body of men to whom he was obliged to fly in time of need. There were seated near the noble Lord persons who equalled him in inconsistency, for after having been clamouring all their lives for universal suffrage, they took the first opportunity which presented itself to limit the existing constituency. He believed that of the hon. gentlemen opposite half had not read the bill, and the other half did not understand it. When he supported the Reform Act he little thought that it would lead to such consequences as seemed about to befall the country.

[The gallery was then cleared for a division, when the numbers were—

|                         |         |     |
|-------------------------|---------|-----|
| For the original clause | . . . . | 262 |
| For the amendment       | . . . . | 234 |

|                          |         |        |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|
| Majority against Freemen | . . . . | 28!!!! |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|

The announcement of the result was received with *faint cheering* from the ministerial side of the House.]

---

LONDON: C. F. COCK, 21, FLEET-STREET.

Price 1d. each; 9d. per dozen; 5s. per 100; or 2l. per 1000.